

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DRC-01 RSC-01 PER-05 OPR-02 A-01 SIL-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO VOA OKINAWA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 6835

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, JA

SUBJECT: VOA LOCAL NATIONAL EMPLOYEE WAGES

REF: OKINAWA 0031

SUMMARY SINGLE FLAT LUMP SUM PAYMENT FOR 1974 WAGE INCREASES OF YOUR JAPANESE EMPLOYEES SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED. IT BOTH VIOLATES OVERALL US LABOR POLICY AND COULD START CHAIN OF EVENTS ENDING IN GOJ REQUIRING YOU TO GRANT YOUR LN'S FULL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS. END SUMMARY

1. BASIC USG POLICY GOVERNING WAGE LEVELS OF LN'S EMPLOYED BY US AGENCIES OVERSEAS IS TO PAY AT RATES PREVAILING IN LOCAL ECONOMY FOR SIMILAR SKILLS. THIS POLICY, CONSISTENT WITH NOT ONLY REGULATIONS OF STATE DEPARTMENT BUT ALSO THE MILITARY SERVICES, REQUIRING PERIODIC WAGE SURVEYS IN LOCAL ECONOMY AND ADJUSTMENT OF LN WAGE LEVELS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SURVEY FINDINGS. SUCH SURVEYS INVARIABLY SHOW A WIDE DISCREPANCY IN PERCENTAGE INCREASES AT VARIOUS SKILL LEVELS AND IN VARIOUS OCCUPATIONS. PAYING A SINGLE FLAT SUM INCREASE TO ALL YOUR WORKERS WOULD NOT CONFORM TO PREVAILING WAGE RATES IN JAPAN.

2. VOA CURRENTLY ENJOYING IMMUNITY FROM APPLICATION
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OF JAPANESE LABOR LAW BECAUSE OKINAWA LABOR RELATIONS

COMMISSION)LRC) SO DETERMINED. HOWEVER, IF QUESTION
OF VOA ENTITLEMENT TO SUCH IMMUNITY WERE RAISED IN
DIET, EMBASSY HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY INFORMED BY GOJ
THAT IT WILL RESPOND "NO". SUCH STATEMENT WOULD LEAD
EITHER TO OKINAWA LRC REVERSING ITSELF, OR TO ITS
REVERSAL BY THE CENTRAL LRC. THIS COULD HAPPEN
ANYWAY: HOWEVER SHOULD VOA ATTEMPT TO ASSERT
INDEPENDENCE FROM EMBASSY PAY PRACTICES UNDER UNION
PRESSURE, THE UNION WOULD CERTAINLY RECOGNIZE THIS
SOFTENING OF RESISTANCE AND PRESS EVEN HARDER ITS DEMAND
FOR FULL RECOGNITION AND BARGAINING RIGHTS. THIS
COULD BE EXPECTED TO TRIGGER GOJ ANNOUNCEMENT THAT VOA
DOES NOT HAVE IMMUNITY. RESULT WOULD BE JAPANESE LRC
AND COURTS SUPPORTING UNION CONTENTION THAT VOA MUST
BARGAIN LIKE ANY PRIVATE COMPANY IN JAPAN.
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